

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5235

As of January 25, 2011

Title: An act relating to animal health inspections.

Brief Description: Regarding animal health inspections.

Sponsors: Senators Schoesler, Hatfield, Delvin, Honeyford, Hobbs and Conway.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/24/11.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: The State Veterinarian has responsibilities for safeguarding animal health and responding to animal health incidents. The state Animal Health Program's objectives are to prevent the importation and spread of communicable diseases in livestock and other animals. This program in the Department of Agriculture also works with other state and federal health agencies on control of diseases that can affect both animals and humans such as avian influenza and tuberculosis. The State Veterinarian also works with federal animal health officials and other state's animal health officials to prevent and respond to animal disease threats. The state Animal Health Program monitors communicable disease outbreaks that are occurring in other countries such as the foot-and-mouth disease outbreak in Korea that is resulting in large animal liquidation in that country.

Livestock and other animals are routinely transported into and out of the state to other states and countries. A number of mechanisms are in place to prevent the introduction and spread of infectious, contagious, and communicable diseases while facilitating commerce. Certificates of veterinary inspection and other forms of health papers are the means of safeguarding animal health while facilitating commerce.

Summary of Bill: Explicit authority is provided to the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to designate when a certificate of veterinary inspection, import health papers, permits, or other transportation documents must designate a destination with a physical address for animals entering Washington State and when those animals must be delivered or transported directly to that location. It is a violation for designated animals to be delivered at a location other

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than the required location. The DOA director is authorized to adopt by rule when a delivery to a specific address will be required.

Flexibility is provided in charging for reimbursement for the cost of investigations including inspection of animals and related records. The current charge is \$85 per hour and this is changed to up to \$85 per hour. Authority is provided to increase this fee by rule.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Diversion of livestock en-route to other than the destination declared in their health papers is a problem and the department needs clear authority to enforce against incidents when they occur. It is ok for some cattle to go directly to a feedlot or processing plant, but if they lack the necessary vaccinations, it is not ok to return to a farm for breeding purposes without the required vaccinations. Also, there have been incidents when groups of dogs have been brought in from another state and have had worms and assorted health problems. When the department responds, they currently can't recover costs. The \$85 per hour flat rate is above the cost of some employees and flexibility is needed to charge less when those employees are involved. The industry supports these changes to provide better protection of the livestock industry from the introduction of diseases.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Dr. Leonard Eldridge, State Veterinarian, WSDA; Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Assn.; Ed Field, Washington Cattle Feeders Association; L.D. Green, Cattle Producers of Washington.